

Message Text

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EXDIS

TOSEC 814

FOLLOWING SENT SECSTATE WASHDC INFO ANKARA NICOSIA FROM
ATHENS 20 MAR 75:

QUOTE S E C R E T ATHENS 2200

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO THE SECRETARY AND, IF DESIRED TO USUN NY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR CY GR TU

SUBJECT: CYPRUS - STATUS OF TALKS AND NEXT STEPS

REFS: A) USUN 887; B) ANKARA 2207

1. FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS CALLED ME THIS MORNING AND
ASKED THAT I PASS A REQUEST FROM HIM TO THE SECRETARY
CONCERNING THE FUTURE LEVEL AND VENUE OF THE INTER-
COMMUNAL TALKS ON CYPRUS. BITSIOS SAID THAT THE SECRETARY
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HAD BEEN VERY FIRM AND EXPLICIT IN THEIR MEETING

IN BRUSSELS ON THE NEED FOR THE INTER-COMMUNAL TALKS AS AN ESSENTIAL FORUM FOR NEGOTIATING A SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS AND THEREFORE, KNOWING HOW THE SECRETARY FELT, BITSIOS WAS REQUESTING THAT THE SECRETARY WEIGH IN ON THIS MATTER. HE SAID THE GREEK SIDE NEEDED "SOME HELP" FROM THE SECRETARY NOW.

2. BITSIOS SAID THEY HAD HAD A LONG MEETING WITH CLERIDES HERE IN ATHENS FOLLOWING THE LATTER'S ARRIVAL YESTERDAY FROM NEW YORK. HE SAID THE BULK OF THEIR TIME WAS SPENT IN CLERIDES BRIEFING TOP GOG OFFICIALS ON WHAT TRANSPIRED WHILE HE WAS IN THE STATES AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE UNSC MEETINGS AND TURKISH ATTITUDES IN NEW YORK. ON SUBSTANCE, BITSIOS SAID THAT NO CHANGE HAD BEEN MADE IN THE GREEK POSITION AND THAT THEY WERE STILL AWAITING THE CONSIDERED RESPONSE FROM ANKARA AS A RESULT OF THE SECRETARY'S VISIT THERE. BITSIOS SAID THEY HAD STRESSED TO CLERIDES THE ESSENTIALITY OF HIS BEING AVAILABLE AT ANY TIME TO GO TO THE TALKS AND REPRESENT THE GREEK COMMUNITY AND THAT CLERIDES WAS QUITE PREPARED TO DO THIS. CLERIDES IS SCHEDULED TO DEPART ATHENS THIS MORNING FOR NICOSIA.

3. NOW THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION HAS BEEN ADOPTED, BITSIOS SAID, WALDHEIM WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY IN PERSUADING THE TURKS TO COMPLY. "I HOPE," BITSIOS SAID, "THAT THIS IS NOT DUE TO THEIR UNWILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE." BITSIOS SAID THAT HE WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF THE SECRETARY COULD HELP BRING THE TURKS BACK TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. IT WAS IRONIC, HE THOUGHT, THAT IT WAS THE GREEKS, WHO ARE THE AGGRIEVED PARTY, WHO NOW HAVE TO PRESS THE TURKS TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS.

4. SPECIFICALLY, BITSIOS WOULD LIKE THE SECRETARY TO STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF DENKTASH PERSONALLY REPRESENTING THE TURKISH COMMUNITY IN THE RESUMED TALKS. HE SAID IT WAS RIDICULOUS FOR DENKTASH TO TALK ABOUT TITLES AND ASSERT THAT HE WAS ON TOO HIGH AN OFFICIAL LEVEL TO NEGOTIATE WITH CLERIDES. AFTER ALL, BITSIOS SAID,

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CLERIDES AND DENKTASH HAVE BEEN REPRESENTING THEIR TWO COMMUNITIES IN THE INTER-COMMUNAL TALKS FOR MANY YEARS AND THEY WERE THE LOGICAL ONES TO CONTINUE THESE TALKS NOW. CLERIDES NEVER OBJECTED TO SUCH MEETINGS WHEN HE WAS "ACTING PRESIDENT" OF CYPRUS AND DENKTASH SHOULD NOT DO SO NOW BECAUSE OF HIS OWN NEWLY SELF-PROCLAIMED TITLE IN THE TURKISH FEDERATED STATE.

5. IN ADDITION, BITSIOS ASKED THAT THE SECRETARY TRY AND PERSUADE THE TURKS TO HAVE DENKTASH GO TO NEW YORK AT LEAST FOR A SYMBOLIC OPENING OF THE TALKS, AFTER WHICH THE SITE COULD BE MOVED TO GENEVA. HE THOUGHT THIS WAS THE LEAST THE TURKISH SIDE SHOULD BE WILLING TO DO, AFTER THEIR FEDERATED STATE PROCLAMATION LAST MONTH, IN RETURN FOR THE GREEK SIDE'S AGREEMENT TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS.

6. I TOLD BITSIOS I WOULD PASS HIS MESSAGE TO THE SECRETARY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND THAT, AS HE KNEW, THE SECRETARY REMAINED READY TO BE OF ASSISTANCE WHENEVER HE COULD. GIVEN THE COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION IN TURKEY AND THE EFFORT BEING MADE NOW TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT, I WAS NOT SURE JUST WHAT THE SECRETARY WOULD BE ABLE TO DO.

7. I ASKED BITSIOS HOW HE FELT ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF DEMIREL TRYING TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT IN ANKARA. HE SAID THE GOG WAS "NOT TOO HAPPY" ABOUT IT. HE THOUGHT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF ECEVIT HAD AGREED TO FORM THE GOVERNMENT BECAUSE ECEVIT WAS IN A BETTER POSITION TO MAKE A SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS. AS IT WAS, ECEVIT MIGHT HOVER IN THE BACKGROUND WITH "OTHER IDEAS" AND MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR A DEMIREL GOVERNMENT TO ARRIVE AT ANY SETTLEMENT THAT COULD BE ACCEPTED BY BOTH SIDES. I REMINDED BITSIOS THAT OUR INFORMATION WAS THAT DEMIREL SEEMED REASONABLY POSITIVE DURING THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO ANKARA, AND BITSIOS SAID HE REMAINED HOPEFUL BUT THAT WE WOULD SIMPLY HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT THE TURKISH RESPONSE WAS.

8. COMMENT: WITH REF TO ANKARA 2207, IT SEEMS OBVIOUS
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TO ME THAT A RESUMPTION OF THE CLERIDES-DENKTASH TALKS IS OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE IN PROVIDING A FORUM FOR OSTENSIBLY NEGOTIATING A SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS, HOWEVER MUCH THE REAL AGREEMENT IS REACHED BEHIND THE SCENES. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY BETWEEN ANKARA AND ATHENS BY THE SECRETARY OR A SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY IS A VIABLE OPTION AT THIS STAGE, NOR DO I THINK THAT LUNS COULD BE REACTIVATED AS A NEGOTIATOR BETWEEN THE TWO NATO ALLIES. LUNS IS PERSONA NON GRATA IN GREECE FOR THE PRESENT.

9. LIKE EMBASSY/ANKARA, I BELIEVE THE BEST COURSE LIES IN A COMBINATION OF OPTIONS C AND D IN PARA 5 OF ANKARA 2207--THAT IS, PRESSING FOR A RESUMPTION OF THE CLERIDES-DENKTASH TALKS AND THEN PUSHING FOR AN EARLY

DIRECT CONTACT BETWEEN THE GREEK AND TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTERS. IF THE INTER-COMMUNAL TALKS CAN BE RESUMED IN SOME KIND OF FACE-SAVING MANNER FOR THE GREEKS, I AM VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT BITSIOS WOULD AGREE TO AN EARLY MEETING WITH THE TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER IN SOME APPROPRIATE THIRD COUNTRY SETTING UNDER THE GUISE OF FINAL PREPARATIONS OF THE GOG AND GOT SUBMISSION OF THE AEGEAN DISPUTE TO THE WORLD COURT. IN FACT, BITSIOS HAD EARLIER ENVISAGED DOING JUST THAT--AND WAS PREPARED TO SPEND A WEEK OR TWO IF NECESSARY AT SUCH TALKS DISCUSSING CYPRUS AND A FULL RANGE OF GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEMS--UNTIL THE DENKTASH ANNOUNCEMENT LAST MONTH PLACED HIM IN A POSITION WHERE HE COULD NOT POSSIBLY MEET WITH HIS TURKISH COUNTERPART UNTIL THE BROKEN-DOWN INTER-COMMUNAL TALKS HAD BEEN RESUMED.

10. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO QUESTION IN MY MIND BUT THAT THE CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT WANTS A SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS QUICKLY. WHILE THERE IS OBVIOUSLY NO GUARANTEE THAT THE CLERIDES-DENKTASH FORUM BUTTRESSED BY PARALLEL BITSIOS-ESENBEL (OR HIS SUCCESSOR) MEETINGS--PRODDED AND REINFORCED BY US AND OTHER APPROPRIATE THIRD PARTIES WHEREVER POSSIBLE--WILL PRODUCE A NEGOTIATED AND PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS, SUCH A COURSE REMAINS IN MY VIEW BY FAR THE MOST PROMISING. KUBISCH UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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